

California Postsecondary Education Commission

Improving Teacher Quality State Grants Program

Project Description

Project Title	Reading, Thinking and Writing in History and Science		
Grant Amount: \$1,010,800	Grant Period: October 1, 2005 – September 30, 2009		
Grade Level: 7 - 12	Subject Matter: History and Science		
Institute of Higher Education	<input type="checkbox"/> University of California, Davis (UCD)		
Local Education Agency	<input type="checkbox"/> Grant Joint Union High School District		
Additional Partners:	<input type="checkbox"/> The History Project at UCD, Department of History, Division of Social Sciences		
Need for Project/ Population To Be Served:	<p>In order to address these extremely low rates of student achievement in reading and math, Grant's feeder districts have either eliminated or significantly reduced instruction in science and history. As a result, students lack experience working with the type of expository texts found in science and history classrooms, such as explanations and argument. The exclusion of history and science curricula from elementary grades also hinders student development of analytical abilities and other discipline-specific skills. This gap contributes to the low literacy rates among both English-language learners and native speakers that plague the Grant District.</p>		
Project Goals:	<p>The overarching goals of this proposal are to improve student performance in four dimensions: 1) increase knowledge of history; 2) increase knowledge of science; 3) improve reading comprehension in history; and 4) improve reading comprehension in science. These goals of student performance will be achieved through teachers' achievement of the following objectives: 1) mastery of a repertoire of reading strategies to help students make meaning from complex expository text, and identification of the evidence supporting historical and scientific claims; 2) learning techniques to scaffold students' ability to write explanation of concepts, models, and theories in science and explanations and arguments in history; and 3) develop classroom discourse structures that support cooperative group work.</p>		
Summary of Activities:	<p>All secondary science and social science teachers in the Grant District will receive 40 hours of Academic Literacy training and subsequent support via literacy coaches in both disciplines. Two formats for the Literacy training will be offered: a 40-hour (five day) summer institute and a seven-day, nonconsecutive, academic year pull-out program to meet the needs of the Grant district and assure that all teachers participate in the program. The Literacy Core in both disciplines will consist of three components: 1) instruction in specific reading comprehension strategies tailored to each discipline; 2) instruction in designing scaffolded writing assignments aligned to the Language Arts Standards for Grades Nine and Ten, designed to teach students how to summarize and synthesize information and how to construct arguments; 3) instruction in strategies for constructive classroom discourse that supports student understanding.</p>		
Outcomes Expected:	<p>Outcomes expected from this work include: 1) increased knowledge of history, measured by CST; 2) increased knowledge of science, measured by CST; 3) improve reading comprehension in history, as measured by a specifically designed reading assessment; and 4) improved understanding and expression in science, as measured by a specifically designed writing assessment.</p>		
Teachers Served	106	Students Served	41,340
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